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stone and pushed *forward, edge foremost,* in such a manner that the free end of the knife finishes by resting on the more distant end of the stone. Here the blade is turned on its back and returned, edge in advance as before, to the place of starting. In drawing the blade the utmost care should be taken *never to raise in the slightest degree the back from the stone;* and *further the knife must not be pressed on the stone, but held lightly by the finger-tips,* and the *necessary friction be left to capillary adhesion.*

After drawing the knife fifteen to twenty times it should be tested as before.

The knives furnished with the Thoma microtome should be provided with a wire support (Fig. 1 *w*) for the back of the knife during the process of sharpening.

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SCIENTIFIC NEWS.

—The results of the Hudson's Bay Expedition, in 1884, under Lieut. Gordon, possess much interest, and Dr. Bell's report on the geology of the extreme northern shores of Labrador, as well as of Hudson's strait, contains new matter especially relating to the glaciation of that country. As to the botanical collections made, Prof. Macoun affirms that it shows conclusively the arctic character of the climate of the straits and that part of Labrador north of Nachvak. Raised beaches, 300–400 feet high, were observed on Hudson's strait. Ancient stone structures, erected by the Eskimo, were observed, and Dr. Bell observes: "From what I have seen of the situations which the Eskimo in various places in Hudson's bay and strait choose for their camps, there appeared to be little doubt that they had lived here when the sea-level was 20 to 30 feet higher than it is at present."

The observations made shows that the basin of Hudson's bay may have formed a glacial reservoir, receiving streams of ice from the east, north and north-west and south and south-west. The direction of the glaciation on both sides of Hudson's strait was eastward. "That an extensive glacier passed down the strait may be inferred from the smoothed and striated character of the rocks of the lower levels, the outline of the glaciated surfaces pointing to an eastward movement, the composition of the drift, and also from the fact that the long depression of Fox's channel and the strait runs from the north-westward towards the south-east, and that this great channel or submerged valley deepens as it goes, terminating in the Atlantic ocean. Glaciers are said to exist on the shores of Fox's channel and they may send down the flat-topped icebergs which float eastward through the lower part of Hudson's strait into the Atlantic. During the drift period, the glacier of the bed of Hudson's strait was probably joined by a contribution from the ice which appears to have occupied the site of Hudson's bay, and by another also from the southward, coming down the valley of the Koksok river, and its continuation in the bottom of Ungava bay. The united glacier still moved eastward round Cape Chudleigh into the Atlantic."

Farther observations on the geology and natural history as well as ethnology of this region are desirable, and will be made during the season of 1885. The steamer *Alert*, in command of Lieut. Gordon, R. N., left Halifax, May 30, Dr. Bell being the scientist of the expedition. Stores sufficient for more than a year will be taken to provide against any emergency. The round trip is expected to occupy five months. The stations to be visited are Port Burwell, near Cape Chidleigh, Ashe inlet, near North bluff, Stupart's bay, near the Prince of Wales Foreland, Nottingham island, Digges island and Nachvak bay, all of which were founded last year. These stations will all be continued, except the last named, which will be dispensed with on the score of economy. Lieut. Gordon expected to reach Hudson's strait by June 10. Provisions for the ensuing year and eighteen tons of hard coal will be left at each station. A large quantity of evaporated vegetables will be taken to the stations. Forty applications have been made for positions as observatory men. Much valuable information is expected to be gained from the observations made during the past year as to the formation and breaking up of the ice and in regard to its movements, also relative to the navigation of the strait. After leaving Fort Churchill, a running survey will be made on such portions of the eastern shore of the bay as are practicable. The *Alert* is expected to arrive back in the strait about August 25, and the remainder of the time will be occupied in surveying as much of the coast of the strait as is possible.

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PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, March 24.—Mr. Garrison communicated the results of his examination of slag from an iron furnace.

Mr. A. H. Smith and Mr. Edw. Potts described borings in the vicinity. One in Cumberland county, N. J., reached a depth of 650 feet, and at 570 feet passed through a bed of oyster shells, stated by Professor Heilprin to be almost certainly Cretaceous.

Dr. Leidy spoke upon the giant extinct sloths, and stated that among fossils received last year from New Iberia, La., were three teeth, a close study of which indicated that the form described by Owen as *Mylodon harlani* should be returned to the genus Orycterotherium, in which it had been placed by its discoverer, Harlan.

Mr. Eastlake presented Entomologia Hongkongensis, and Mr. A. F. Gentry a description of a supposed new species of Cyanocorax.

March 31.—Dr. Horn referred to certain sexual characters separating forms of the Staphylinidæ. The gradual disappearance of these forms might be considered as an instance of nature's